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IN THE LAND  
OF DAKOTA

MILDRED LUCILE WIRSTED



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# IN THE LAND OF DAKOTA

*A Little Book of North Dakota Verse*

BY  
HULDAH LUCILE WINSTED



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TO MY FRIEND

MRS. WILLIAM A. ANDERSON





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IN THE LAND OF DAKOTA



## IN THE LAND OF DAKOTA

In the East ye struggle for glory  
And power, and wealth, and fame,  
And time ye expend, and much labor,  
To trace down your ancestors' name;  
But here in the land of Dakota  
Where the winds sweep over the plains,  
Is winnowed away much useless "chaff,"  
And only true worth remains.

In the East ye crush out the life-blood  
Of innocent children, grown old  
By premature toiling and labor  
To fill up your coffers with gold;  
But here in the Land of Dakota  
Our children are happy and free,  
And over the plains of its limitless mains  
Re-echo their laughter and glee.

In the East ye build up great mansions  
And sky-scrapers gaunt and high,  
That shut out the glory and grandeur  
Of the infinite tender sky;  
But here in the Land of Dakota  
Our eyes look up on high  
And our souls learn wonderful lessons  
From the white clouds sailing by.

## THE SEASONS IN NORTH DAKOTA

Spring—and the wild March wind  
The snow-covered prairies sweep;  
From North Dakota's frozen clod  
The fur-clad Pasque Flowers peep.

Summer—and gentle showers,  
And soft the zephyrs blow;  
O'er North Dakota's rolling plains  
The modest Roses grow.

Autumn—and burnished skies,  
And parching, sun-scorched sod;  
And by the wayside still there blooms  
The stately Goldenrod.

Winter—the flowers are dead  
And fierce the cold winds blow;  
Yet 'spite of North Dakota's snow  
The flowers of Hope still grow.

## THE DELUGE

(A Berthold Indian Legend)

Long ago, yes, oh, so long since,—  
When the world was young and fair,  
All the animals were friendly;  
E'en the bison and the bear  
Aided man with all their cunning,  
Helped him with their counsels grave,  
Helped him as the gods alone can—  
Made him wise and strong and brave.  
And the flowers on the prairies  
Blossomed ever, shy and sweet,  
For the land of the Dakotas  
Knew not frost, nor killing heat.

But there lived a dread god, North Wind,  
Cruel was he, with heart of stone,  
Feared of all and loved by no one,  
Living to himself alone  
In the land of snow and blizzard,  
In the land of deadening cold,  
Plotting ever some new mischief,  
Some new ravage, cruel and bold.  
And one day this mighty North Wind  
Left his throne of ice and snow,

In the cold, far distant northland  
Where the wriggling ice-worms glow;  
Southward came he, and the flowers  
Bent their lovely heads in death,  
For from out his icy nostrils  
Came an all-destroying breath.—  
At the mighty, stately forests  
Angrily his teeth he gnashed,  
With one mighty blow he felled them  
And with chains the rivers lashed;  
Ceased their laughter and their murmur,  
Ceased their sweet life-giving flow.—  
All the birds and beasts in terror  
Fled, and knew not where to go;  
Food they found not, and no shelter,  
Dying were the mortals all,  
And a slow relentless snow shroud  
Draped the earth as with a pall.—  
Death supreme reigned; loud the North Wind  
Roared defiance to the gods!—  
Birds and beasts and man in terror  
Fled, and, dying, called the gods  
To avenge their death and suffering,  
To unite them one and all  
In the holy cause of vengeance,  
To secure the North Wind's fall.—  
And the South Wind, fairest maiden



Of the gods, took up their cause;  
Girded now herself for battle,  
And after a moment's pause  
Called unto her loyal brothers,  
The strong East Wind, and the West,  
"Help revenge the suffering mortals"—  
And they granted her request.

Strong the fight raged in Dakota  
'Twixt the North Wind and his foes,  
Now one side yields, now the other,  
Fierce and loud the tempest blows;—  
Savagely the monster charges  
Grappling with his unseen foes  
While a wild, chaotic blizzard,  
Such as ne'er was seen, arose,  
Hiding all within its fury,  
Made the daylight dark as night,  
For the very gods were grappling  
In a last terrific fight.—

Ages long the battle lasted—  
Then the maiden fair and lovely,  
Smiled benignant on her foe,  
And his very heart was melting  
(For 'twas made of ice and snow);

Loosed the rivers from their bondage,  
Vanished now the shroud of snow,  
And o'er North Dakota's prairies  
Flowers fair began to grow ;  
With the advent of the flowers  
Came the birds and beasts and man,  
Built again their homes and wigwams—  
And no more they anxious scan  
The horizon for the North Wind,  
Knowing that he's met his fate ;  
But the South Wind, fair and lovely  
Rules now o'er Dakota's state.

Southward now each year the North Wind  
Wends his way to see her face,  
To the land of the Dakotas  
Where the battle once took place ;  
Smiling sweet, the maiden greets him,  
Warms again his chilly heart ;  
Satisfied, he briefly lingers—  
With him, winter's cold, depart.

## NORTH DAKOTA SUNSETS

Such beautiful tints in the western skies !  
Purples and gold and the deepest rose,  
Crimson and scarlet the heavens suffuse  
Where the sun of the prairies sinks to repose ;—  
Spaces where lingering daylight plays  
With the skirts of night in her sombre gown,  
Spaces where gathering mists hang low  
Ere the shadows of night come drooping down.—  
Such, North Dakota, thy sunsets are—  
Spreading their glory near and far,  
Flooding the soul with a holier peace  
That lingers long after the daylight shall cease !

## NORTH DAKOTA—PAST AND PRESENT

(The Passing of the Red Man)

Low-lying hills, "bad lands" and rolling plain,  
Stretching afar like billows on the main,  
With winding rivers seeking distant homes,  
And leagues of virgin prairie  
Where stately bison roams.

The brave Mandan, the Shenyenne and the Sioux,  
The Chippewa and the Grosventre too,  
Along the rivers and the plains did dwell;  
The land they called Dakota,  
And methink they named it well.

And here they lived for centuries untold,  
Watching the secrets of the plains unfold;  
Their homes they built and smoked the pipe of peace,  
And vowed by the Great Spirit  
Their friendship would not cease.

\* \* \* \* \*

Gone are the braves. The papooses and the squaw  
No longer wait for winter snows to thaw;  
The tepee's gone, the peace pipe and the dance,  
Gone, gone, alas! forever,  
The Red Man's fighting chance.

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*In the Land of Dakota*

---

For pale face came, and from Dakota's plain  
The Red Man drove, and claimed his vast domain;  
No power on earth could stay the Viking's son,  
For "iron men" are born  
In the land of midnight sun.

\* \* \* \* \*

Onward they came, these Northmen, feared of old,  
Bold pioneers, to wrest the hidden gold  
From North Dakota's hills and virgin sod;  
The ploughshare won the land  
For these "master men" of God.

\* \* \* \* \*

Their children now look out on well-tilled fields,  
And garner wealth, that many a rich mine yields;  
The argosies of earth their treasures bear—  
For empty rank and title and sham,  
They little care.

\* \* \* \* \*

O boys and girls of North Dakota's Land,  
Guard, love her well! Pledge her your heart and  
hand!

Where else on earth are seen such sunset fires—  
What other race can boast  
More fearless dames and sires!

## A PRAIRIE SUNRISE

Gray and silent is the morning—  
Shadows like some airy lawn  
Veil the prairies from our vision;  
Night is breaking into dawn.

Look! Along the eastern heavens  
Yonder cloud a beacon glows,  
Touching all with mellow brightness;  
Gray is turning into rose.

Sombre shadows swiftly vanish—  
Gorgeous are the fiery dyes  
That adorn the far horizons,  
Flooding earth, and air and skies.

See! The sun is slowly rising  
O'er the level fields of grain,  
Restless, golden billows surging  
On a vast and boundless main.—

Hark! A distant sound is breaking  
Through the stillness deep and calm—  
O'er the prairies floats the cadence  
Of sweet Nature's morning psalm.

DAKOTA LAND, DAKOTA LAND

Dakota Land, Dakota Land,  
We love thy rolling prairies;  
Thy "bad lands" 'yond Missouri's bed  
The fertile valley of the Red—  
Dakota Land, Dakota Land,  
We love thy rolling prairies.

Dakota Land, Dakota Land,  
We love thy sunset fires;  
Thy sunny days, thy azure skies,  
Thy starry nights, thy sunrise dyes—  
Dakota Land, Dakota Land,  
We love thy sunset fires.

Dakota Land, Dakota Land,  
We love thy modest wild rose;  
Thy fields of waving, golden grain,  
Like billows on a boundless main—  
Dakota Land, Dakota Land,  
We love thy modest wild rose.

Dakota Land, Dakota Land,  
We love thy changing seasons;  
Thy winter's cold, thy summer nights,

---

*In the Land of Dakota*

---

Thy blust'ry spring, thy autumn bright—  
Dakota Land, Dakota Land,  
We love thy changing seasons.

Dakota Land, Dakota Land,  
We love thy far horizons;  
No mountains hide the gorgeous dyes  
That paint with splendour western skies—  
Dakota Land, Dakota Land,  
We love thy far horizons.



## NORTH DAKOTA'S MISSION

Pioneers of North Dakota

Spread her fame!

Bid thy youths and bid thy maidens

Guard her name!—

Tell them of your dreams and visions—

Tell them of your great ambitions;—

How you fought to win the land;

Tell them of brave Custer's band.

Tell them how you fought the Red Man,

How he lost—

Tell them North Dakota's story

And the cost!—

Can they too, like you, the price pay?

Can they too, like you, their lives lay

Down, if need be, for their state?

Dare they share her every fate?—

\* \* \* \* \*

To the children of Dakota

This we give,

First of all, a glorious vision

How to live—

Them we give our mines and "bad lands,"

Prairies broad and fertile wheat lands

Stretching from Missouri's bed  
To the Valley of the Red.

And the fame of North Dakota's name  
Shall rise,  
Like the never-tiring Phoenix  
To the skies!—

State of promise and of fair play,  
State where rises bright a new day  
For the weak and the oppressed,  
State which millions shall call blest!

Men and women of Dakota  
Who shall say  
What the fruitage of our efforts  
Of to-day?—

Labor then, nor lose the vision  
Of this North Dakota's mission,  
To free body, soul, and mind,  
To help all their true work find.

## WE WHO HAVE LIVED IN DAKOTA

We who have lived in Dakota  
We who have loved her right well,  
We who have known her, and tried her,  
Marvelous tales could we tell;  
Tales of the Sioux and the Mandan,  
Tales of the Sheyenne as well;  
Deeds of brave Custer and Sully,  
Fain unto you we would tell.

Hard have we worked, and we've conquered,  
Conquered the Red Man—the sod.—  
Over the primeval prairies  
Forward and onward we've trod.  
Fought we with sword and with ploughshare,  
Wresting our bread from the clod—  
Virgin and untouched we found it  
As left by the hand of our God.

---

*In the Land of Dakota*

---

Yes, we've weathered the blizzards.  
Crop failures many we've known.—  
Early and late have we labored,  
Felt the cold wind to the bone.—  
Glad we have been when our neighbor  
Garnered the golden grain,  
Knowing our mortgage was unpaid,  
And all of our efforts seemed vain.

Glad have we been when the harvest  
Yielded an hundred-fold—  
Paying the debt and the mortgage,  
Lining our pockets with gold.  
Yes, we still love North Dakota,  
Knowing she'll compensate well  
Those who are willing to try her;—  
To summer and winter her well.

## MISCELLANEOUS VERSES



## GUIDING VOICES

Echoes of beloved voices  
Reach us in the silent night,  
Sooth the feverish, restless spirit,  
Bring us messages of light;  
Messages of love to cheer us  
Onward still, though dark the way,  
Whispers fraught with hope and courage  
For the battles of the day.

'Midst the clamor and the tumult  
And the din of shop and mill,  
Still the voices of our loved ones  
All our vibrant beings thrill  
With celestial music holy;  
Quenching lust, and pain and strife,  
Which are rife where Mammon reigneth  
All supreme in human life.

When the evening shadows lengthen  
On life's pathway, as we go,  
And our sight is getting dimmer  
And the sands of time run low,  
"Courage, brother," still they whisper,  
"Keep the path, we'll guide the way,  
Till thou reach the land where shadows  
Lose themselves in Perfect Day."

A PRAYER

Make me gentle, Lord, and kind;  
Honest, frugal, pure of mind;  
Patient, humble, meek and mild;  
Trustful as a little child.

Make me earnest, Lord, and strong;  
Just and faithful; foe of wrong;  
Slow to anger; friend of all;  
Swift to answer duty's call.



TO A FRIEND

My love for thee, lips cannot tell,  
Nor words, nor actions, half as well  
As my full heart would wish;  
But sometimes, in another land,  
When we have reached the Golden Strand  
I know, you'll surely understand.

A DREAM

It was midnight. And those spirits  
Who men's destinies control  
Were in solemn court assembled,  
Waiting for the bell to toll  
The final hour of the year;  
And what happened you will hear:

Elves and gnomes and dwarfs came tripping  
On the light fantastic toe,  
From their distant caves and castles  
In the land of ice and snow;  
And the elf-king, white and hoary,  
From his throne arose and spoke:  
"Fellow spirits all, I greet you."  
(And just then old Father Time  
Rang out the old year—1909.)  
"Friends, I feel our power is waning,—  
Man, our ward, is now proclaiming  
Among others, a most curious thing,  
That in a chair he likes to swing  
Because his ancestor, an ape,  
Was very apt to use his tape  
To swing himself from limb to limb  
Of trees and vines which on them cling.

Moreover, he is now so learned  
That to a fossil he is turned,  
Instead of joining our free band  
Of spirits, in the fairy land."

Silence reigned supreme a moment ;  
Then an old dwarf, ripe with age,  
Arose, and all those elves and fairies  
Bowed their heads a little space  
For that "grand old man," whose wisdom  
In that hall rang loud and clear :  
"Time has come when man no longer  
Feels he needs invoke our aid,  
For creation, now he tells us,  
By itself was surely made ;—  
Blind he is to Nature's teachings,  
And so wise in his conceit  
That he would forget the lessons  
Taught by wayside flowers sweet ;  
By the river and the mountain  
And the myriad things that creep  
Upon the earth. And this wondrous  
Human being calls himself but a machine,  
Classed among the things he fashions  
From the metals earth doth yield.  
Ah, his very heart is hardening—

---

*In the Land of Dakota*

---

Love no longer can hold sway  
When the heir of all creation  
Says he's only made of clay."

\* \* \* \* \*

I awoke from my light slumber  
At the New Year's earliest beam,  
Pondering deeply if a lesson  
Could be learned, e'en from a dream.

## THE LIGHT

The way is long, the night is drear,  
I stumble on through doubt and fear;  
My heart grows numb, all hope takes flight;  
Oh, Father, let me see the light!

Was it for me that He has died?  
Was it for me the Crucified  
Bore the deep anguish in the night?—  
Oh, Father, let me see the light!

O doubting child, look up and see,  
It was for sinners, such as thee,  
Christ conquered sin, and death, and night.  
Look up, dear child, behold The Light!

SISTER DEAR, I LOVE YOU SO

Sister dear, I love you so!  
As the seasons come and go,  
Dearer still, my friend, you grow.  
Sister dear, I love you so!

Sister dear, I love you so!  
Ah, forgive each thoughtless blow;  
Though I've often hurt you—oh,  
Sister dear, I love you so!

Sister dear, I love you so!  
May love's flame still brighter glow,  
Friendship's fires ne'er burn low.—  
Sister dear, I love you so!

Sister dear, I love you so!  
As your birthdays come and go,  
Let me whisper, soft and low,  
Sister dear, I love you so!

Sister dear, I love you so!  
When life's fires dimmer glow,  
Take this with you, as you go,  
Sister dear, I love you so!

NIGHT WATCHES

In the still watches of night  
Long ere the dawn comes a-creeping  
Over the eastern skies,  
Think of the hearts that are breaking;—  
Oh, hear the moans and the sobbing—  
Feel how the pulses are throbbing,  
Just because some one was thoughtless.—  
Oh, was that someone you?

### MEN ARE THREE

There are all kinds of people we meet on the road,  
As we travel along life's way;  
And some are surly and some are grave  
And others are jolly and gay.  
And some folks are short, while others are tall,  
Still others are skinny and thin—  
And some skip along, a-humming a song,  
But others are simply all in.  
But where'er they come from, or whither they go,  
We pigeon-hole each of them so,  
We group them, and sort them, and label them all,  
The short ones, the skinny, and tall.

There's the man or the woman, the boy or the girl,  
That's always a-wishing a share  
In somebody's fortune, or somebody's fame,  
Yes, they wish for the moon 'way up there.—  
Then there's that group of persons  
Who talk, talk, and talk,  
You simply don't know what they say—  
From morning till night they keep talking away,  
And the night is like unto the day.—  
But quietly along, on the very same road,  
Walk others, with little to say,



And if they have wishes (What mortals have not?),  
They put them discreetly away.

They're the workers, the lifters of burdens,—who  
dare

To fight for the right if need be,

Alone 'gainst a world—

And defiance they hurl

To all tyrants wherever they be.

You have met these three classes of people, I'm sure,  
As you've traveled adown life's way—

The folks with their wish-bone enormously grown,  
And the "jaw-bones," who talk all the day.—

And I know you have shunned them,

As others have done

From the day that time began,

But you've hailed with delight,

And you've longed for the sight

Of the steady, quiet, "back-boned" man.

SMILES AND TEARS

Swift run the hours on to days  
And days to years—  
And each and every one is filled  
With smiles or tears.

Sometimes the skies are over-cast  
The live-long Day—  
But when the sun shall smile again  
Why, who can say!

## COLUMBIA TO SHAKESPEARE

(An Appreciation)

We are gathered here from the ends of the earth,  
The children of Teuton and Celt;  
The children, too, of Latin and Slav  
At Liberty's shrine have knelt.

America is proud to take  
From out of bondage and strife,  
And weave them all into one great whole,  
These strands of human life.

She'll dye them all in the self-same red  
Of Liberty's crimson hue;  
And place them as the glorious stars  
On Freedom's field of blue.

And we, the children of all the earth,  
To thee, poet of all times,  
Bring honor, and laurel, and love as well—  
And crown thee, king of rhymes.

Thou brought us to the very homes  
Of Saxon, Dane and Moor,  
And sweetly sang thy choicest lays  
Alike to rich and poor.

---

*In the Land of Dakota*

---

Thou didst act well, thy every part,  
On this brief stage of life;  
Thou taught us too, our parts to play  
In peaceful work, or strife.

Renowned bard of Albion's land  
America bids thee rise  
Like Phœnix, fabled from of old—  
Immortal, to the skies.

### THE ANSWER

Writ in the skies above me  
In sentence of purest gold,  
In answer to age-long questions:  
God ruleth as of old!

### THE IMMIGRANT TO THE STARS AND STRIPEs

O Flag, on all the earth the best,  
Thou emblem of true liberty,  
We, immigrants from all the earth,  
Pledge thee our love and loyalty!  
Thy crimson bars to us are dear,  
Thy stars with hope our hearts imbue;  
Thou emblem of fraternity,  
We will be true, yes true to you!

O Flag, thou flag of Washington,  
Thou emblem of democracy,  
We'll follow thee, whate'er befall,  
We pledge to thee our fealty!  
Our brain, our brawn, our life, our all—  
America, we give to you!  
With heart and hand we pledge anew  
To God and you, we will be true!

We will be true, yes, true to you,  
O Flag, and all for which you stand:  
Equality and liberty  
And happiness throughout the land.—  
Thy foster sons, America,  
Will serve thee well—thy daughters too;  
Their life, their all, they pledge anew,  
O Stars and Stripes, to you—to you!

## THE PEACE OF THE WOODS

Oh, oft when I come to the city,  
I long for the peace of the woods;  
For the sighing of winds in the pine trees  
And the laughter of running brooks;  
The chatter of squirrel and chipmunk,  
The call of the shy wood dove.—  
Oh, the forest's the place to listen  
To that grandest of anthems—Love.

Ere the darksome shades of the forest  
Have vanished, at early dawn,  
A million happy creatures  
Are chanting their morning psalm;  
They sing of the joy of living,  
In happiness, peace, and love,  
And gratefully raise their voices  
To the great All-Giver above.

And I, in a gladsome spirit,  
Join in with the happy throng;  
Sustained, and strengthened, and soothed,  
By Nature's mighty song.—  
And oft when I come to the city,  
I long for that song of love,  
That the forest's happy creatures  
Raise to the Father above.



KEEP THE PATH CLEAR!

Oh, do not trifle with friendship, I pray,  
Guard it more closely each swift-flying day;  
Gifts the most precious, and gold cannot pay  
For friendship once broken.  
It's vanished for aye!—

Keep clear the path to your friend's heart, I pray!  
Weeds of forgetfulness soon choke the way;  
Pass that way often; keep polished, I pray,  
The flagstones that guide you down friendship's  
own way!





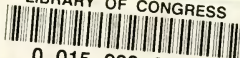








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